
CAPITOL CONNECTION

A Weekly Update of News and Views
For Opinion Shapers and Policy Makers

Congressman Gary G. Miller
42nd District, California



December 7, 2007

Newly Installed Webcams to Monitor Flash Floods

In order to monitor the Santiago Creek for flooding and debris flow, the U.S. Geological Survey is installing a 24 hour webcam at Santiago Canyon Road and Modjeska Canyon Road, where the Santiago Canyon Road crosses Santiago Creek. Once installed, the public can have access to a live Internet feed by going to <http://ca.water.usgs.gov> and clicking on the "View Webcams" button. The website also provides information about ground water and water quality. In light of the immediate threat of mudslides and flooding in the 42nd District, those in need of information or assistance are encouraged to contact Congressman Miller's Brea office at (714) 257-1142.

Recent Fires Pose Continued Health Risks

In the wake of the Santiago Fire, residents in burn areas are warned that ash from the wildfires is extremely caustic and contains high levels of arsenic, lead, and other toxic metals. Breathing in these fine particles may cause health problems and those handling corrosive ash or debris are strongly urged to wear protective gloves, masks, and long-sleeved clothing. Area residents are also cautioned that these hazardous substances may reach drinking water supplies and rainstorms forecast for this weekend are likely to wash dangerous substances into waterways.

House Votes to Establish Online Arsonist Database

This week, the House unanimously passed the Managing Arson Through Criminal History (MATCH) Act, a bill to establish and maintain arsonist registries and make them available on the Internet. The image and memory of destruction is far too fresh in the minds of Southern California residents after the most recent round of wildfires destroyed over 500,000 acres and left hundreds homeless. All too often these fires are started by arsonists in a single spot and the winds of the region spread the fires over thousands of acres. Arson is also one of the most difficult crimes for prosecutors to obtain a conviction. Congressman Miller is confident that having a registry of convicted arsonists that is accurate and available to our fire and arson investigators will allow them to have the information they need to fully investigate and prosecute these insidious crimes.

United States' Fugitive Alien Population Declines for First Time

The Department of Homeland Security this week announced the results of their recent push to arrest criminal aliens and immigration fugitives across the nation. In 2003, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) launched Fugitive Operations Teams to dramatically expand the agency's efforts to locate, arrest, and remove criminal aliens and immigration fugitives from the United States and to enforce deportation orders. In the last fiscal year, ICE Fugitive Operation Teams deployed 75 teams across the country and arrested 30,408 individuals, an increase over the 15,462 arrests made the year before. These teams prioritize cases involving immigration violators who pose a threat to national security and community safety and those who have convictions for any violent crimes. Congressman Miller applauds the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security to coordinate information from state and local law enforcement and remains committed to identifying and apprehending individuals who ignore our immigration laws.

Port of Los Angeles Celebrates 100th Anniversary

The House this week approved a resolution honoring the 100 year anniversary of the founding of the Port of Los Angeles, which has been the nation's largest containerport for the last seven years. The Port of Los Angeles is part of the Southern California port complex, which handles more than 43 percent of all goods arriving in the United States, impacting over 1 million jobs nationwide. Between now and 2030, the amount of cargo the port handles is expected to triple. As an original cosponsor of this resolution, Congressman Miller was pleased that the House has recognized the importance of the Port of Los Angeles to our region and the goods that it provides to the nation. Congressman Miller continues to make the efficient movement of goods from our ports a top priority in Congress.